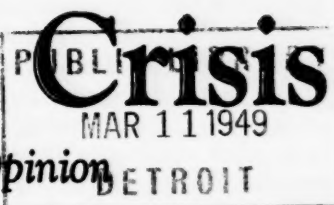


Christianity and Crisis

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Roman Catholics and Communism

THE religious war between Communism and Roman Catholicism has reached a new stage of fury. Cardinal Spellman's sermon in Saint Patrick's Cathedral was the most publicized sermon in many years, and in its power to increase hatred it established another record. Pope Pius in his apostolic exhortation on February 12th began by saying that "the conflict between the good and the wicked, in whose ever tangled strands of human actions and motives history is woven, has seldom if ever, been so acute as it is today." An American Bishop announced that the world is divided between those who are for God and those who are against God.

Protestants know that Communist opposition to religion is thoroughgoing in principle, that they can expect to be persecuted whenever Communist tactics call for such persecution, as in the case of Bishop Ordass in Hungary and in the case of Bulgarian evangelical leaders in recent weeks. Protestants must resist the extension of any totalitarian movement, including Communism. They share with Roman Catholics indignation against the use of torture and drugs to break the spirit of any man. This is the most horrible element in totalitarian police methods. But Protestants should make it clear now that they are not allies of the Roman Catholics in their long standing holy war against Communism. They sympathize with the victims of oppression whether they be Cardinals or ordinary men, and whether the place be Hungary, Bulgaria, Spain, or Argentina. But neither the hysterical words of Cardinal Spellman nor the self-righteous words of the Pope are adequate for this situation. When we speak of the "self-righteous words of the Pope" we refer, for instance, to such remarks as: "Everyone knows that the Catholic church does not act through worldly motives." Actually almost everyone outside of the Catholic church knows that the church is a political force, and that all sorts of motives enter into its political calculations. Its spiritual difficulty lies precisely in the fact that it so easily identifies the ultimate sanctities with immediate and morally ambiguous political ends.

The one objection to Roman Catholic utterances and attitudes on this subject is that they never seem

to recognize how far the church itself is responsible for the atheism and anti-religious policies of Communism. It is a tragic fact that the working classes in many countries became convinced that Christianity was on the side of the *status quo*. This was believed about all the main branches of the church and it was largely true. The Roman church, since the time of Leo XIII, has greatly improved its teaching on social issues, but this change came very late, and its effect upon the life of the church has been slight in eastern Europe, as well as in Spain and Italy. The changes that have come in Protestantism in the interests of social justice have also been very late, and their results have been spotty, but Protestants can, more readily than Catholics, admit the moral responsibility of the church, at least in part, for the very evils which it must now oppose. The simple contrast between the "good" and the "wicked" with which the Pope began his statement on February 12th is false, for the "good" have done too much to cause the "wicked" to be what they are. These considerations do not make it any the less necessary to oppose Communism, but they should at least alter the spirit in which we do it.

Another objection to the Roman Catholic type of religious crusade against Communism is that it fails to take account of the actual situation in which the people live to whom Communism makes a strong appeal. Let us put it this way. The number of fully convinced and fully indoctrinated Communists in the world is comparatively small. The strength of Communism is the appeal that it makes to dissatisfied people who are no more Marxists in their theory or in their central life philosophy than the readers of this journal. Communism wins them because it promises solutions of particular problems. The sad consequence of the Roman Catholic propaganda is that to most of these people who are not now Communists in conviction it will seem that they must choose between the Communist promises and goals on the one hand, and Christianity (often not only Roman Catholic Christianity) together with the *status quo* on the other. Even if Roman Catholics have some constructive programs of their own, these will make no impression because of the degree of

emotion in the anti-Communist crusade. However much provocation there may be, however sound the opposition to Communism may be, when the church allows itself to make a furious anti-Communist crusade the central thing, the actual effect is to strengthen the forces of reaction which give Communism its opportunity. It also means that Christians may lose touch with the millions of people in such a country as China who are not Communist in conviction, but who in the next years are likely to prefer Communism to any alternative regime that is available. This kind of religious warfare cannot but force such people to choose Communism, not only as an economic and social program, but also as a faith that is an enemy of the Christian faith.

It is not easy to write this way about Roman Catholicism. This journal has steadily avoided participation in the anti-Catholic feeling that has gained strength recently in American Protestantism. But, in all candor, it is necessary to say that the prospect of being part of a spiritual world that has its center in either Moscow or Rome is a frightening one. Protestants should find ways of making it clear to the world that hate-producing religious warfare against Communism does not serve the Christian cause.

This kind of religious warfare is a self-defeating method of dealing with persecution. It only convinces the persecutors that they are right in counting the churches irreconcilable political enemies. It may well destroy the flexibility that otherwise might exist in Communist policies in different countries—here the case of China is fateful—and insure a policy of all-out persecution everywhere.

Resistance should take the form of a sober strategy that does not seek to retain old institutional privileges that were sources of anti-clericalism before the rise of Communism, that never fails to see churches and "Christian civilization" as well as Communism under God's judgment, that refuses to seek as allies governments supported by inflamed public opinion, and that never fails in charity toward the multitudes who follow the Communists often because the churches have failed them.—J. C. B.

Editorial Notes

"Everyone knows," declared the Pope in his allocution, "that the Catholic church never acts from worldly motives."—"The diplomacy of the Soviet state," declared Foreign Minister Molotov, "bases itself firmly on the scientific analysis of objective reality. . . . Soviet diplomacy always adheres strictly to principles. It is alien to combinations promoted by the situation at a given moment, to unscrupulous transactions, intrigues, intimidations

or to disguising real tendencies by false formulae."

We know how distasteful it will be to many readers to place these two pretentious claims in the same paragraph and thereby suggest that they have any similarity. The Catholic church claims never to act from worldly motives, because any policy by which it defends, protects, and extends the influence of the church in the rough struggles of history is for the sake of an institution which is more than an historical institution. It can, therefore, not grant that the difference in its attitude toward a fascist regime, which is merely perverting justice, and a Communist regime, which seeks to destroy the church, is determined by the anxious survival impulse of an historic institution. Whatever treasures of grace are born in the earthen vessels of this historic institution cannot, however, completely hide from the critical, or even from the sympathetic, observer that very human and sinful human motives express themselves in this struggle for survival. One might mention the rather hysterical sermon of Cardinal Spellman on the Mindszenty trial, to which Professor Bennett refers in the leading editorial, as a case in point.

It will be remembered that the eighteenth century thought with Condorcet that all fanaticism could be abolished from human civilization if we could only get rid of "priests and their hypocritical tools." The rationalists of the eighteenth century rightly discerned that the root of fanaticism lies in the unwillingness of finite men to admit the conditioned character of their perspectives and the interested character of their judgments. It correctly saw a fruitful source of the illusion of the absolute in religion, but it erroneously regarded traditional religion as the only source of it.

It did not foresee to what degree "the scientific analysis of objective reality" would take the place of priestly absolutism as the source of fanaticism. It did not foresee that a Stalinism would arise, which would justify the most intolerable injustices, the most ruthless diplomacy, and the most cynical subversion of juridical procedures on the ground that all Communist tactics spring from devotion to the laws of "objective reality" discovered by a Marxist-Leninist science. Evidently it is possible to pretend to stand above the ambiguities of human existence without the benefit of clergy. The resulting pretensions are even more monstrous. Insofar as they are more monstrous we must more rigorously resist them. While doing so, we will shed a tear, however, over the plight of a civilization caught in a controversy between a Caesar who knows nothing about Christ and a Vicar of Christ who is a little too sure of the complete identity between his own and Christ's purposes.—R. N.

Christianity Faces Communism in China

BEN T. COWLES

A CHINA in which Chiang Kai-shek is no longer Generalissimo-President, and Kuomintang Nanking is no longer the capital, demands a completely new pattern of Chinese-American relations. The formation of this new pattern is going to require much more than our traditional "good will."

American Christians have had an uneasy conscience concerning their country's recent relations with China. First, there have been misgivings about the wisdom and justice of our foreign policy, where in the thirties, we "participated in" Japanese aggression in China, and in the forties—beginning with the recall of General Joseph Stillwell (1944)—we have poured out aid to the Kuomintang without appropriate controls. Secondly, there have been questions about our contributions to the various China relief funds: How much actually reached the needy? Why could not wealthy Chinese who had fat gold savings in American banks cooperate in helping their own countrymen? Considering the magnitude of China's need, how much good could be accomplished with even the maximum we might raise? and, Isn't there a more fundamental kind of aid which would reduce the necessity for relief? Thirdly, we ask questions regarding the restoration of our Christian missions since V-J Day: Were we right in spending sums to rehabilitate property which was soon to be destroyed again in the civil war? Have we been justified in putting so much of our personnel and funds into our institutions? In the relations between Chinese personnel and missionaries, could not we reduce the differences and increase the fruitfulness? What are we to do with so many of our China missionaries who are now returning, or retreating, after our having sent them out with our benedictions so few months ago?

Such questions are not new to the members of the sending churches. However, the seeming sudden ascendancy of the Kungchintang (Communist Party of China) has turned these queries into sharp issues upon which the very life of the Chinese church depends. American Christians—enjoying an ample margin of time, security, resources and the necessities of life—can indulge in meeting this Christianity-Communism dialectic in the realm of theory. If we leave it there now, we are not only unfaithful to our commitment in our greatest single field of missionary endeavor, but we are forfeiting God-given opportunities for a new approach to both Communism and China.

In developing this new approach much depends upon those who sponsor and support missions—the members of local churches. Their first responsi-

bility should be that of acquainting themselves more thoroughly with the increasing volume of accepted facts pertaining to the advance of Communism in China in relation to the church.

I.

What happens when the Communists enter an area in which a church is located? Expediency and the caprice of the local commanders result in exceptions, but in general there is a regular procedure. Each step is accomplished by "technicians," who are experienced in carrying out that particular phase of the advance.

First, the populace of an area is peppered with promises and suggestions of a new and better social order. The threat of violence, being understood, need not be made overtly. Appeals, subtle and otherwise, are made, playing on all the susceptibilities of a war-weary and poverty stricken people. Leaflets, anonymous communications, and *yao yen* (rumors) all seek to convey the idea, "here's something not as bad as that which you are living under now," and "you'd better join the band-wagon."

Military forces come in as a second step. Earlier in the civil war towns were often captured and relinquished after supplies and ammunition were confiscated. But sooner or later town after town was taken over. Since violence and destruction came in proportion to the degree of opposition offered by the defending forces, all concerned preferred to have attackers and defenders make a deal in advance which would permit a peaceful turn-over. Upon their entrance, the Communists executed top Kuomintang officials. In some towns where contending families or recalcitrant factions needed "equalizing," feuds with attendant lootings and killings are instigated. To keep, or establish, civil order and to win the confidence of the populace, such violence was avoided wherever possible. Observers report consistently that the Communist "shock troops" who carry out this phase are unusually well trained and have amazing morale.

Once they have "liberated" a locality, the military are moved to other campaigns. The political organizers, who are the third wave, drill the representatives of the people at great length in Communist ideology and methods. Working through and with such a chosen corps, the structure of a soviet organization is quickly erected. Land and grain distribution is carried out in accordance with set standards. Enemies of the people—the wealthy, the opponents of Communism, usurers, oppressive gentry, and

others—are brought to justice in a *tou cheng* (mob trial).

After “returning the land to the people,” there is the returning of the rule to the people. In some instances elections are held which permit the nomination of a certain percentage of non-Communist representatives. By transferring the civil government to indoctrinated local citizens, the party organizer, as their military before them, are freed for assignments in new areas.

In the course of the Communists’ advance, church properties have not suffered out of proportion when compared with the damage to buildings of other institutions in the same area. During military struggles for a locality, churches and mission compounds were frequently hit in the cross fire of artillery or by shrapnel from bombs. Often the damage was done by the Nationalist force—e.g. in Nan Hsueh (Presbyterian); and the cathedral in Tsinan (Catholic). Upon occasion, church and particularly mission property was subject to confiscation because of its connection with “foreign capitalists”—e.g. the Methodist compound in Changli, Hopeh, where the newly rehabilitated hospital was looted and one residence was burned.

II.

In Communist “liberated” areas the work of church members and their pastors continues. There are notorious exceptions, and though still alive, congregations have not had an easy existence.

Aside from the physical hazards, churches in the path of hostilities have found the continuance of their work complicated, to say the least. While entering forces placard churches with guarantees of “Religious Toleration,” church leaders are confronted with a gradual tightening of restrictive controls. Passes permitting travel between villages are not easily procured, so pastors and laymen find itinerating difficult. Sermons are liable to censor. Christian literature enters Communist areas only with great difficulty (up ’til now, chiefly a transportation problem). Financing these churches presents serious obstacles: subsidy from foreigners or foreign sources is prohibited, and the church work of a pastor is not readily viewed as “productive work.” So terrific is the strain of living and trying to work under such tensions of insecurity and suspicion that young priests (mentioned in a Catholic report) have aged ten years in scarcely ten months.

Instances of “persecutions” by Communists are numerous. However, the prevalence or the significance of such impositions is difficult to ascertain. The accounts of Christians being crucified or buried alive because of their faith have not been proved satisfactorily. The more usual and better substantiated reports include such instances as: An east Shantung church member was beaten

and his pastor killed because they were “too outspoken,” and “too well-known in their village.” An evangelist in central Honan was put to death because he denied hiding possessions of several Kuomintang men whom he had harbored; or, a Lutheran pastor (Chinese) in northeast Honan was killed when he refused to organize and carry out a looting foray. Careful analysis of these and other examples taken from a wide variety of circumstances reveal several tendencies: Church members in country areas appear to have been more subject to annoyance than those in the cities. Christians were submitted to the *tou cheng* (mob trial) or otherwise persecuted, either because of, or on the pretext of, some other offense—e.g., having been a landlord, having incurred the animosity of a citizen who was anxious to see him in trouble, and so on. Death has resulted in comparatively few cases. A sober and conscientious Christian, who has worked (serving a United Nations organization) for long periods within “liberated” areas, commented “the Kungchintang has so many other urgent tasks that we are perhaps presumptuous if we credit them with giving a very high priority to a per se persecution of Christians.

Despite annoyances to the point of physical torture, and despite a potentially antagonistic policy to the organized church, the gospel is being proclaimed and Christians are having fellowship with each other. Chinese priests (Catholic) in most instances reported, are continuing Mass, confessions and family instructions. The worshipping of Protestants is, likewise, not extinct. Letters from Kueiteh, Honan, report that their (Lutheran Mission) Bible School is still in progress. Information from congregations—e.g., in Paoting, Hopeh; in Kueiyuan, Suiyuan; Loyang, Honan; Paochi, Shensi; and others—whose members and pastors are deeply grounded in their faith convey encouraging signs of vitality. The existence of these churches depends upon their (a) being thoroughly indigenous and self-supporting, (b) being organizationally alive, (c) winning the confidence of the people by demonstrations of community service, and most important, (d) possessing a vibrant, gospel derived, spirit.

Even in the face of such gratifying news, many observers fear that the “open doors” are but temporary expedients for the Communists. Christians in areas still not occupied by the Kungchintang are beset with another multitude of troubles. Caught in the vortex of the most radical political turn-over in their country’s still uncompleted revolution, Christians in China face an uncertain future. Some retreat into cynicism, others give way to opportunism, while still others are engulfed in a confusing sea of fear, insecurity and hopelessness. A significant minority of Christians, on the other

hand, are endeavoring to face Communism as it sweeps across China, and are even now thoughtfully and prayerfully setting about the task of realizing the fullest possibilities of their strategic position.

A daring and a faith like that of our Master will alone suffice to lead the Chinese church out of the dark valley in which it now finds itself. Having a will-to-survive, Chinese Christians need to adjust to the fact of a Communist regime and at the same time "out live, out love," and even "out die" that regime. This can, with God's grace, carry them beyond a new adjustment into a *new approach*. Their Church, under its own responsibility and power, must mobilize for advance. With prayer, study, and cooperative discussion in fellowship circles a vital over-all plan such as the Forward Movement of the National Christian Council needs to be worked out and launched. Coupled with their deep faith in the Gospel and the conviction that Christ's cause will ultimately triumph, the Chinese Christian must have *works*—works for the farmer, the laborer, and the refugee.

III.

The full contribution of the foreign missionary to the church in a Communist China depends upon a number of factors which as yet have not been decided. Important among the "unknowns" is the nations' foreign policy (particularly that of the U.S.A.) toward China and the spiritual health of the sending churches.

As to the former, American citizens who have won an understanding of the new situation in China can have, at least for the time being, a definitive part in determining economic and cultural exchange between the United States and China. After that, intelligent and repeated appeals must go to our Executive and our legislators urging aid to projects honestly and efficiently administered to help Chinese people build up their capacities and develop more productive and modern communities.

As to the latter, home churches by all means must reinforce the Chinese church with contributions of money, program suggestions, appropriate literature, and personnel (foreign and Chinese). Through prayers, communications where possible, and missionaries remaining on the field, we should make frequent and visible evidences of our love and concern for our Chinese brothers in Christ.

In the meantime, along with the evidences of the working of the Holy Spirit in the field of China, the home church deserves to know exactly how effectively the Devil has been at work. It is dishonest for the sending churches not to be told the real reasons and the nature of the manifold difficulties and hardships the missions have encountered in post-war China. Otherwise, where is the uniqueness of the

transforming and regenerating work of God's grace, in the midst of the abysmal needs of the Chinese people and immense problems which accompany those endeavoring to spread the Gospel in China today?

Compared with the millions of casualties suffered by Chinese, very few foreign missionary lives have been lost in the course of this bloody Civil War. One Swedish evangelist (China Inland Mission) was brought up for mob trial (*tou cheng*), and was beaten to death by Communists. Out of the 120 priests reported killed,* it is estimated that about one-fourth were foreigners. The three Mission Covenant missionaries killed in 1947 west of Hankow, in Hupeh, were shot probably by bandits. Despite the fact that Americans are the least welcome foreigners, it is significant that not one American or Canadian has been killed. This is not to minimize the restrictions put upon foreigners, the loss of personal property, and many narrow escapes they have experienced. Nor is this to ignore the imprisonment of some of our missionaries by the Communists—e.g.: Rev. Richard Hillis and others (of C.I.M.) south of Kaifeng were held in custody for 63 days; Mrs. Genessee (Presbyterian) was imprisoned, suffered a mob-trial and almost starved before Communists finally allowed her to leave her Hopeh station months later. Missionaries have survived because of the loyalty of their Chinese colleagues, because they were viewed favorably by the people in the community—and often even by the attacking Communist commanders, because they spoke Chinese and at the very outset could talk with Communist soldiers and invite them to rest awhile and sit in their living rooms for at least a cup of tea. The Grace of Christian kindness has worked over and over again, even with the most hardened and anti-foreign indoctrinated Communist shock-troops.

Why then, during these last three months, have missionaries "retreated" home in such numbers? This evacuation has not in any sense been ill-advised. Missionaries have been very reluctant to accept it. However, a number of strong reasons have made it necessary. Life, as well as property, is seriously endangered when first a city is fought over, and second, if mob vengeance breaks out before civil order is re-established. Under Communist occupation bare existence becomes a serious problem when adequate food, money, and medical supplies cannot be guaranteed. During this interim (the period of the turn-over) there were indications that a large staff of foreign missionaries could not all have work to do, and even that they might possibly become a burden on the local Chinese Christians. The United States Govern-

* Reported in the Catholic journal, *China Missionary*, Winter number, 1948.

ment representatives in China not only urged evacuation, but sent planes and ships to the interior to transport missionaries to port cities. Housing this unprecedented number of evacuees then in Tsingtao, Hongkong and chiefly Shanghai became almost impossible. Priority in the evacuations was given those who would suffer or possibly hinder the cause most. This included those close to retirement, the sick, families with small children, and persons, who under a Communist regime, would be either imprudent or nervous. Viewed in light of these facts the sending church should consider that this is a "strategic retreat." Lenin himself, espousing a lesser cause, at one time advocated "taking one step backward that we might later take two forward."

Missions and missionaries need to see and accept the elements of the Lord's judgment in this development of the China field. We need on the one hand to re-study the Old Testament prophets, especially Jeremiah and Isaiah, to understand how the Lord's judgment rests on our cause. We must realize that China's millions, and particularly the farmers who comprise 85 % of the population, have already judged the Kuomintang on the basis of the Pauline standard:

"If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit?" (James 2: 15-16). On the other hand, the new order—Communism, too, if it be the new system—will be judged just as severely as is the Kuomintang if there is "faith without works." Missionaries as persons need to chasten themselves, or as St. Paul wrote to Timothy, "For their sakes I discipline myself . . ." Missions, as organizations, need likewise to chasten their methods, personnel, finances, policy and spirits to match the urgency of the Communist challenge.

Survival and growth of the church in China depend upon missionaries and Chinese Christians who will recognize the creative possibilities of their situation. This is hardly the time for indulging in messages of comfort and sympathy found in I Peter, for example. This is the time for transforming, witnessing and dynamic reaching out such as we find in Corinthians, Ephesians or Philippians. Relations demonstrably better—between man and man, and man and God—must be manifested: in the open as long as "toleration" of Christianity exists, and underground if and when the doors are shut. ". . . Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph, . . . For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word; but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ." (II. Cor. 2: 14-17).

* * * * *

The following two paragraphs are excerpts from a recent letter from a missionary who has proved to be a wise observer of Chinese conditions.

" . . . I want to say one thing fundamentally, and back it up as best I can. From all I've been able to observe and hear this fall, the only constructive thing which the Christian church or the United States government can do in the present situation in China, is to come to grips with the Communists, within the framework of one political order, not across the battle lines. With due understanding of the nature of their theory and of the force of Russia behind them, and yet knowing the practical situations they are up against, the U. S. government has got to sit down at the table with them and play poker. I think there is a chance here, to make a permanent hole in the iron curtain, unless we ourselves are so iron-curtain minded, that we force the curtain down over China. Let me mention a few supporting points: (1) The economy of all China's large port cities depends on foreign trade, a large portion with America. Industrial equipment cannot be supplied from Russia and is essential to the maintenance of the population and the development of China. American know-how and American money through ECA have made real impressions in places. British and American leadership in industry, utilities, and other services, have given them the discipline and efficiency necessary to do the work which the proletariat has learned to appreciate and depend on. The Communists could simply decide to destroy cities and start over. Russian Communists have been that ruthless. But their record so far suggests that they are not that sort. So (2) the Communists here are also Chinese, and some of them, perhaps even a majority, are Chinese before they are Communist. The Party in China is the largest in the world, and pays for it with extreme localism and loose discipline. Right now the guesses are that there is struggle in the ranks between the peace-minded and the orthodox revolutionists. Of course the top leadership is pretty hardened and sophisticated. But it is not inconceivable that a genuine split could be developed if a coalition were properly engineered and worked on. Here cleverly-used propaganda, especially if pressing an alternative constructive ideology, could be more effective than most material weapons. (3) Russia is weaker in the Far East than in Europe by a long way. My guess is that she has not intervened more actively in the Chinese civil war because she knew she would be overreaching herself. Her economic ties with even North China, are tenuous. Soviet merchants and business have little place except in Manchuria and Mon-

golia. Most of the Communists south of there have never seen a Soviet Russian. Hence a good neutral, or weak coalition government, even under American economic influence, might be acceptable to the U.S.S.R. to the extent that they might tell their cohorts in China to lay low and work within it. . . .

" . . . It probably reached the American papers that our good friend C— R— came out of one Communist area with good reports of all that is going on there. . . . Law and order are better maintained than before. There is no interference with existing property except where some of it, hitherto unused, is taken over for official purposes. Part of our mission compound, for instance, houses the tax bureau. The Communists have a new and buoyant spirit, and insist that they and the missionaries are aiming at the same goals though they

have different ideas. They are eager to have good reports of their regime get out. They escorted C— R— to the Nationalist lines to make sure there would be no hitch in his passage. And most important, they have no basic objection to outside finances supporting missionary institutions, or to the charging of school tuitions, the collection of church contributions, etc., which will give those institutions a free economic existence. Before C— R— arrived we had heard all sorts of wild rumors—that all the missionaries had been told to get into "productive work," that night gangs were looting and killing where wealth was to be had, without interference from the authorities (who blamed them on Nationalist bandits)—and so on through half a dozen more. But not a shred of truth in any of them. . . ."

The World Church: News and Notes

Conflict of Views on Mindszenty

The Mindszenty arrest stirred up universal condemnation outside of Hungary, both Catholic and Protestant. Dr. Paul Empie, president of the National Lutheran Council, extended "the sympathies of 60,000,000 Lutherans in all parts of the world to Hungarian Catholics."

But churchmen, both Protestant and Catholic, within Hungary took strangely divergent views on the matter. During January, Roman Catholic Bishop Ladislas Banassy is reported by Religious News Service to have issued a pastoral letter urging the necessity of establishing "good relations" between the Communist-dominated government and the Catholic Church in Hungary. An organization known as the "Progressive Catholics" has asked the government for permission to publish a weekly newspaper. The group holds that Communism and Christianity are not necessarily incompatible.

RNS also received reports of statements made by responsible leaders of the Hungarian Reformed and the Hungarian Lutheran Churches—the two largest Protestant churches in Hungary—sharply criticizing Cardinal Mindszenty's "Political Catholicism" and asking leaders and members of Protestant churches abroad to "separate the cause of the church from the case of Cardinal Mindszenty." The Protestant leaders claimed that their churches "had fullest liberty to preach, to engage in missionary and charitable activities, and to educate youth in religion."

A United Press report of January 19 stated that a government-issued "Yellow Book" contained a "confession of Cardinal Mindszenty, purporting to show that Mindszenty, through the American Minister, Mr. Chapin, was carrying on negotiations with exiled Prince Otto of Hapsburg. The same day, however, Vatican sources warned that any confession of Mindszenty would be due to a widely used drug "capable of breaking the strongest will."—*The World Council Courier*.

Protestant Missions on Indonesian Conflict

The Foreign Missions Conference of North America, which represents 102 Protestant mission boards, at its 55th annual meeting in January, held in Buck Hill Falls, Pa. (USA), adopted a resolution requesting that the United States representative on the Security Council of the United Nations be instructed to demand the withdrawal of the Dutch Army to its lines of December 19, 1948, and the release of Indonesian Republican leaders without "reservation or restriction."

E. P. S., Geneva.

Indonesian Pastor Arrested

On January 24, Pastor Iskandar, one of the leading pastors of the Church of Eastern Java, was arrested by the Dutch police in Soerabaja.

Pastor Iskandar has played a considerable role in the Christian community in Soerabaja. While he is an ardent nationalist, he took a stand against the use of force in solving political conflicts. His Church was attended by both Javanese Christians and Dutch soldiers.—E.P.S., Geneva.

Greek Theologian Asks World Council to Ban Proselytizing

The World Council of Churches should condemn proselytizing carried on by any of its members, according to Dr. Amilcas Alivizatos, professor of canon law at the University of Athens.

Writing in *Ekklesia*, official organ of the Greek Orthodox Church, Dr. Alivizatos said he would propose such a ban at the next Assembly of the World Council.

Dr. Alivizatos condemned proselytism as "a restriction of religious freedom and a sin" because it aimed at "the dissolution of a Christian church in favor of another."

His condemnation came in an article refuting a

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charge made by *The Christian Century*, undenominational religious journal published in Chicago, that religious liberty was being violated in Greece.

The *Century* had asserted that the "betrayal" of religious liberty in Greece "must be charged to the account of the Greek Orthodox Church." It demanded that the World Council of Churches "disassociate" itself from the actions of the Greek Church if the latter failed to "mend its ways."

The Greek theologian also took *The Christian Century* to task for assailing a death sentence imposed recently on a Jehovah's Witness who refused to fight in

the Greek army because of his religious scruples. (The Jehovah's Witness referred to has since been executed.)

"Conscientious objection is completely unknown and inconceivable among us," Dr. Alivizatos said. "In any case, it is unacceptable, especially when claimed by persons who do not have a high concept of religion."—*Religious News Service*.

Hungarian Protestants Send Emissary to World Council

An emissary of the leading Protestant churches in Hungary left Budapest recently for Geneva, Switzerland, to consult with leaders of the World Council of Churches there.

The emissary is the Rev. Dr. John Victor, a Budapest Reformed minister who once studied at Princeton University.

According to church sources in Budapest, Dr. Victor was sent to Geneva as a special envoy of the Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist and Methodist Churches.

One of the purposes of his mission, it was said, was to ask the World Council of Churches not to take any action connected with the situation of churches in Hungary without first consulting the Hungarian Protestant churches.—*Religious News Service*.

Protestant D.P. Resettlement Lags

Under the present D.P. law (No. 774) passed by Congress last June, only 3900 Displaced Persons have entered the United States as of January 31, 1949. Of those coming to America, only 360—less than ten per cent—have come under Protestant auspices.

These figures, recently released by Church World Service, indicate serious shortcomings in the present D.P. law which is now slated for amendment in Congress. They further indicate a lagging program of resettlement of Protestant D.P.'s, since a quarter of the D.P. population in Europe is Protestant. The January, 1949 meeting of the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of Churches adopted a resolution calling on the Protestant churches "to redouble their efforts to secure jobs and housing essential to the resettlement of Displaced Persons."

The World Council Courier.

Author in This Issue

Rev. Ben T. Cowles has recently returned to the United States from China after three years' service in Nanking, where he was in charge of young people's work for the Nanking Presbytery under the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions.

Mimeographed copies of the index for Volume VIII of *Christianity and Crisis* are now ready. Copies are being mailed to all libraries. Anyone else interested in receiving a copy should notify this office, 537 West 121st Street, New York 27, New York.

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